TLID that follow-up of at least 1 year, probably 2 years, would be needed to be fairly confident that virus would not return, and even then monitoring would likely last a lifetime. "We should not give too much hope", said Barré-Sinoussi. When referring to patients who might still have virus in hidden reservoirs, in these early years in the search for a cure, making too much of such cases can raise unrealistic expectations among people living with HIV. "To me it's not a cure, it's remission we are looking for", Barré-Sinoussi concludes.

Peter Hayward

28th International Congress of Chemotherapy

The biennial International Congress of Chemotherapy and Infection took place in Yokohama, Japan, June 5–8. Some meeting highlights are reported below.

NDM-1 in the environment

Following studies on spread of the antibiotic resistance gene NDM-1 in south Asia and beyond, published in this journal in 2010 and 2011, Tim Walsh (Cardiff University, UK) and colleagues have continued their environmental survey work. Walsh is something of a persona non grata in India, so his search for NDM-1 has moved to Karachi, Pakistan. He reported that 21 of 25 sewerage samples from Karachi were positive for NDM-1, in 19 different bacterial species (symposium 23-3). Walsh does not believe that NDM-1 had a nosocomial origin; instead, he proposed that the resistance mechanism started in the environment and was imported into hospitals. NDM-1 has now been found in 45 different species of microorganisms worldwide.

Resistance trends

Trends in the Asia-Pacific region in extended-spectrum β-lactamase (ESBL) producing *Klebsiella pneumoniae* from intra-abdominal infections (poster P51) and *Escherichia coli* from urinary tract infections (poster P52) were reported by Sibylle Lob (International Health Management Associated, Schaumburg, IL, USA) and colleagues. ESBL-positve *K pneumoniae* increased significantly from 2008 to 2011 in isolates from hospital-associated infections and intensive-care units. Isolates non-susceptible to ertapenem and imipenem as a result of carbapenemase production increased from 0% to 77%; however, the number of isolates was too small to draw conclusions. More than 20% of *E coli* were ESBL positive in most countries that provided data, with Australia and New Zealand having the lowest rates (about 5–10%) and China and Vietnam the highest (about 60%). The authors emphasise the importance of knowing local susceptibility rates when deciding appropriate empirical therapy.

Gonococci susceptibility

M Yasuda (Gifu University Hospital, Japan) and colleagues examined 1400 clinical isolates of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* collected in Japan from 2000 to 2011 (poster P109). Most isolates were resistant to penicillin G and tetracycline. Cefixime has been the recommended treatment in Japanese guidelines; however, the authors found that 20–30% of isolates had reduced susceptibility to this drug. All isolates were sensitive to ceftriaxone and spectinomycin.

Experts speakers?

A J Rodriguez-Morales and colleagues (Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, Colombia; poster P370) found that speakers at international infectious diseases congresses had far more publications in Medline (median 57) than those at national meetings in Colombia and Venezuela (one). Organising committees of national meetings should try harder to invite expert speakers, say the authors.

John McConnell

Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus conference

"Now is not the time to start raising the anxiety level about MERS", said Brian McCloskey (Public Health England [PHE], London, UK), at a meeting on Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) organised by PHE in London on July 9. Of the 80 confirmed cases on the day of the meeting, all have occurred in or been linked to the Middle East, and the virus seems to be spreading slowly. The first case treated in the UK, a 49-year-old Qatari man, died in June after heroic efforts to save his live, including 231 days of extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, reported Chris Langrish (Guy's and St Thomas', London). Infection causes diffuse alveolar damage, pulmonary haemorrage, and syncitial cell formation, said Thijs Kuiken (Erasmus Medical Centre, Rotterdam, Netherlands). Identifying the source of infection is a research priority. Albert Osterhaus (Erasmus Medical Centre) said the virus is related to coronaviruses found in bats but probably has intermediate mammalian hosts. Other priorities include establishing diagnostic tests and treatment strategies, and health and economic risk assessments.

John McConnell